[English]

Gas Based Power Station in MP

2530. SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government propose to set up a power station based on gas in Bhander of Madhya-Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH) : (a) to (c) There is a proposal for setting up of 342 MW Dual Fuel based (Gas/Naptha) Combined Cycle Power Project in the private sector at Bhander in Gawalior district. M.P. The generating company namely M/s Bhander Power Ltd.. has been formed for implementation of the project.

[Translation]

Participation of NGOs in the Field of Science and Technology

2531. SHRIMATI KAMAL RANI : Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the assistance of Non-Governmental Organisations is being sought in the field of Science and Technology;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise

(c) the details of such organisations in Uttar Pradesh and the amount of financial assistance provided to them during the last three years and the provision of funds made for 1997-98; and

(d) the details of the projects undertaken by the organisations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) The information is being collected and will be palced on the Table of Lok Sabha.

[English]

Allocation of Gas for Power Generation in UP

2532. SHRI BHAGWAN SHANKAR RAWAT : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government of Uttar Pradesh has sent a proposal for allocation of gas for power genertion in the state; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH) : (a) and (b) Yes. Sir. The Government of Uttar Pradesh has requested for allocation of gas for establishing four gas based power projects by private entrepreneurs to be located at Jagdishpur (210 MW), Aonla (600 MW), Shahjahanpur (600 MW) and Babrala (600 MW). However, as the gas projected to be avialable along HBJ pipline has already been fully allocated. it has not been found feasible to allocate any gas to the proposed power projects of Government of Uttar Pradesh.

Provision of Escalators at Vijayawada Railway Station

2533. SHRI P. UPENDRA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have allocated funds for providing escalators at Vijayawada Railway station;

(b) if so, whether work has not been started inspite of allocation of funds; and

(c) if so, the reasons for the delay?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The estimate for this work is under process for sanction and the field activities would start after sanction of the estimate.

Debt Trap of Railway Land

2534. SHRI PRITHVIRAJ D. CHAVAN : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Railways are facing the threat of falling into debt traps on account of high interest rate to be paid on funds mobilised by Indian Railway Finance Corporation; and

(b) if so, the steps taken to pull Railways out of the debt trap?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) and (b) There is no immediate threat of the Railways falling into a Debt Trap on account of interest rate to be paid on funds mobilised by Indian Railway Finance Corporation. Indian Railway Finance Corporation has raised the money through tax-free and taxable bonds as well as External Commercial Borrowings at very competitive rates of interest, which are lower than the commercial rate

prevalent in the market. Railways are also taking necessary steps to augment their revenue and contain operating expenses in order to increase the internal generation of resources and keep market borrowings to the minimum. Indian Railways is also seeking greater budgetary support from the Central Government.

Steam Engines

2535. SHRI AMAR PAL SINGH : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the total number of steam engines in the country;

(b) the time by which these steam engines are likely to be replaced by diesel and electric engines; and

(c) the manner in which the steam engines are to be disposed of ?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) As on 1.4. 1997, there were 75 steam locos working on Indian Railways.

(b) Steam locos are expected to be replaced by 2000 AD depending upon the availability of diesel/electric locos on Indian Railways except in some sections of tourist importance where such locos will be an attraction.

(c) Steam locos are disposed of by auction as scrap by the Railways. However, some locos are being preserved in the museums/important places.

[Translation]

Telephone Exchange in Rajasthan

2536. SHRI NARENDRA BUDANIA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware of the faults in telephone exchanges situated in Churu and Nagaur districts of Rajasthan;

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Government to improve the telephone services in these districts;

(c) whether any scheme to expand and modernise these telephone exchanges and to link more and more telephone exchanges with STD service is under consideration of the Government;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA): (a) Yes, Sir. Faults in telephone exchanges are generally attended in time. But some times, due to thefts of Open Wire lines, the working of telephone exchanges get affected.

(b) Details are given in Statement-I attached

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) As per Statement II (A,B,C)

(e) Not applicable in view of (d) above.

Statement - I

Steps taken to improve telephone services in Churu and Nagaur districts in Rajasthan

1. Regular monitoring in rural and far flung exchanges is being done.

2. Two sub-divisions at Sadulpur and Sardarshahar in Churu Distt. have been recently opened.

3. Group dialing between Sujangarh (Churu) and Ladnu (Nagaur) exchange have been provided recently.

4. Connectivity between exchanges is being progressively converted to reliable media.

5. 8 channel open wire carrier system between Bidasar-Sujangarh and 3 channel system between Bimsar-Sujangarh have been provided in May, 1997 and June, 1997 respectively, which have improved the connectivity of these exchanges.

6. In Nagaur Distt. Makrana has been brought on 34 MR OFC media this year and OFC laying and dropping work is in progress for Parbatsar, Kuchaman city and Merla city.

Statement - II (A)

Tentative Expansion and Modernisation Schemes for the year 1997-98

S.No.	Name of Scheme	Churu Distt.	Nagaur Distt.
1	2	3	4
1.	DELs to be added	2800 lines	5300 lines.
2.	Net capacity to be added	3336 lines	5936 lines.